

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 0606

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PGOV PORG MX

SUBJECT: CREATION OF A NEW UNDER SECRETARY POSITION IN
THE MEXICAN FOREIGN SECRETARIAT

REF: MEXICO 384 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: ON JAN 9, FONSEC ALFONSO GARCIA ROBLES
ANNOUNCED THE CREATION OF THE NEW POSITION OF UNDER SECRETARY
FOR SPECIAL INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND AFFAIRS. THIS NEW
POST WILL BE OCCUPIED BY AMB JORGE CASTANEDA. THE LEVEL OF
AND RESPONSIBILITIES ASSIGNED TO THIS NEW POST TOGETHER WITH
THE BACKGROUND OF ITS FIRST INCUMBENT ALL INDICATE THAT
THE GOM PLANS TO UPGRADE THE ALREADY CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE
IT ATTACHES TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION POLICY. END SUMMARY.

2. WHILE IT IS TOO EARLY TO BE CERTAIN OF THE REASONS FOR
THE CREATION OF A THIRD UNDER SECRETARY POSITION, THE
FOLLOWING HYPOTHESES ARE POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS:

A. THE GOM HAS DECIDED TO UPGRADE THE EMPHASIS IT
PLACES ON INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION POLICY (ALREADY OF
CONSIDERABLE INTEREST AND IMPORTANCE TO THE GOM).

DISCUSSION: THE GOM HAS DEVOTED A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF
ATTENTION AND TALENT TO IO AFFAIRS FOR SOME TIME: IT
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EAGERLY AND AGGRESSIVELY SEEKS TO OBTAIN KEY POSITIONS IN

INTERNATIONAL BODIES AND TO MAKE MEXICO THE SITE OF CONFERENCES AND SEAT OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. IN THE PAST, NEITHER UNDERSECRETARY GONZALEZ SOSA NOR UNDERSECRETARY GALLASTEGUI SEEMED TO HAVE OR EXERCISE ANY COMPREHENSIVE AUTHORITY OVER MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS--PROBABLY BECAUSE THIS FIELD WAS PRE-EMPTED BY FONSEC RABASA (AND THE PRESIDENT). AS A RESULT, THERE WAS A DISCERNIBLE GAP BETWEEN THE FOREIGN SECRETARY AND THE NEXT HIGHEST (THIRD ECHEVLON) OFFICIAL DEALING WITH THIS IMPORTANT AREA. GARCIA ROBLES AND JORGE CASTANEDA HAVE CONCENTRATED IN THEIR CAREERS ON IO AFFAIRS AND HAVE STRONGLY INFLUENCED MEXICO'S IO POLICY FROM THEIR RESPECTIVE MISSIONS IN NEW YORK AND GENEVA. ECHEVERRIA MAY STILL HAVE HIS EYE ON THE UN SECRETARY GENERALSHIP AND MAY FEEL THAT HIS CAMPAIGN CAN BE ORCHESTRATED BETTER WITH THE GOM'S TWO LEADING IO AFFAIRS EXPERTS RUNNING IT--AND THE FOREIGN SECRETARIAT.

B. GARCIA ROBLES WANTS TO INSTALL HIS "OWN TEAM" OF TOP ADVISORS AND POLICY MAKERS AT FOREIGN SECRETARIAT WITHOUT A PUBLIC SHAKEUP. DISCUSSION: THE FORMER "OUTS" (WHOM RABASA REGARDED WITH ILL-CONCEALED ANIMOSITY REPUTEDLY BECAUSE THEY MADE IO POLICY DIRECTLY WITH THE PRESIDENCY AND SOMETIMES WITHOUT CONSULTING THE FOREIGN SECRETARIAT) ARE NOW THE "INS". MOREOVER, THERE ARE SEVERAL REASONS THAT GARCIA ROBLES MAY WISH TO DILUTE THE ROLES OF THE OTHER TWO UNDER SECRETARIES AT RELACIONES EXTERIORES. RUBEN GONZALEZ SOSA HAS FREQUENTLY EXHIBITED SUCH A POOR GRASP OF FOREIGN POLICY THAT MANY HAVE CONCLUDED HE IS NOT VERY ASTUTE. JOSE GALLASTEGUI MAY BE IN DISFAVOR IN MEXICAN POLITICAL CIRCLES BECAUSE OF HIS OPEN POLITICKING ON BEHALF OF MARIO MOYA PALENCIA, WHO WAS DEFEATED IN HIS BID LAST FALL FOR THE RULING PRI'S NOMINATION FOR PRESIDENT BY JOSE LOPEZ PORTILLO. SINCE BOTH GONAZALEZ SOSA AND GALLASTEGUI HAVE SOME INDEPENDENT POLITICAL STANDING, IT MIGHT NOT BE SIMPLE MATTER TO REPLACE THEM, AND NO DOUBT THE GOM WOULD PREFER TO AVOID POSSIBLE ADVERSE CRITICISM AND SPECULATION WHICH FURTHER RESIGNATIONS AT THE FOREIGN SECRETARIAT MIGHT PROVOKE. IN ORDER TO DETERMINE TO WHAT EXTENT GARCIA ROBLES IS MOVING HIS OWN TEAM IN, CONFIDENTIAL

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WE NEED MORE INSIGHT INTO HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH CASTANEDA AND ON WHETHER EITHER OF THE TWO PRINCIPALS IS BRINGING KEY SUBORDINATES FROM NEW YORK OR GENEVA. (WE INVITE ADDRESSEES TO COMMENT).

C. THE NEW UNDER SECRETARY POST WAS CREATED EXPRESSLY FOR JORGE CASTANEDA AS PART OF THE PROCESS OF PREPARING HIM TO BECOME THE NEXT FOREIGN SECRETARY. CASTANEDA, WHO HAS SERVED AS HIS COUNTRY'S AMBASSADOR AND

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE U.N. AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA FROM 1970 UNTIL HE WAS NAMED UNDER SECRETARY, MAY WELL NEED SOME TIME TO REACQUIRE HIS POLITICAL TOUCH AT THE SECRETARIAT. MOREOVER, GARCIA ROBLES, WHO WILL TURN 65 IN 1976, MIGHT BE A TRANSITIONAL SECRETARY. AT PRESENT, WE DO NOT KNOW LOPEZ PORTILLO'S VIEWS ON CASTANEDA AND HIS SUITABILITY FOR THE FOREIGN SECRETARY POST DURING THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION. D. REALIZING THAT THE TEN AND HALF MONTHS LEFT IN ECHEVERRIA'S ADMINISTRATION ARE NOT ENOUGH TO EFFECT A FUNDAMENTAL REORGANIZATION OF THE FOREIGN SECRETARIAT, GARCIA ROBLES HAS OPTED TO CREATE A NEW UNDER SECRETARY AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR THIS. DISCUSSION: A REORGANIZATION IN ORDER TO RATIONALIZE AND STREAMLINE THE CONFUSING, ALMOST CHAOTIC, STRUCTURE OF THE FOREIGN SECRETARIAT HAS LONG BEEN DISCUSSED AND URGED FROM VARIOUS QUARTERS WITHIN THE GOM. THIS HYPOTHESIS IS NOT VERY SATISFYING SINCE THE NEW POST LEAVES INTACT THE CONFUSION WHERE IT IS AT ITS WORST, I.E., IN THE ALLOCATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND THE CHAIN OF COMMAND WITHIN THE SECRETARIAT'S LOWER ECHELONS. IN FACT, GRAFTING ON A NEW UNDER SECRETARY POST WILL PROBABLY TEND TO AGGRAVATE SOME OF THESE PROBLEMS.

3. THERE IS, OF COURSE, NOTHING EXCLUSIVE ABOUT ANY OF THESE HYPOTHESES: A COMBINATION OF SEVERAL OR OF ALL MAY UNDERLIE THE DECISION TO CREATE THE NEW UNDER SECRETARY POST.

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